

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 SANA 02267 01 OF 02 141107Z  
ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01  
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15  
ICA-11 TRSE-00 AID-05 ACDA-12 /094 W  
-----101059 141247Z /10

P R 140925Z MAY 78  
FM AMEMBASSY SANA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4703  
INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT  
AMEMBASSY AMMAN  
AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMEMBASSY JIDDA  
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT  
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN  
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT  
AMEMBASSY LONDON

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 SANA 2267

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, YE  
SUBJ: CABINET STILL STALLED

REF: (A) SANA 2114 (NOTAL), (B) STATE 122730 (NOTAL),  
(C) SANA 2265

BEGIN SUMMARY: EFFORTS BY GHASHMI TO FORM NEW GOVERNMENT  
ARE STILL STALLED FOR REASONS WHICH APPARENTLY GO BEYOND  
CONTINUED DEFIANCE BY ABDALLAH ABDAL ALIM. END SUMMARY.

1. FOR PAST WEEK PRIME MINISTER ABDAL AZIZ ABDAL GHANI,  
FOREIGN MINISTER ABDALLAH AL-ASNAJ (AND OTHER MINISTERS OF  
SOUTHERN ORIGIN LIKE MINISTER OF LABOR AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS  
ABD AL-SALAM MUQBIL AND MINISTER OF STATE AHMAD ABDUH  
SAID) HAVE BEEN IN TAIZ ATTEMPTING TO MEET WITH RENEGADE  
PARATROOP COMMANDER, MAJOR ABDALLAH ABDAL ALIM. LATTER  
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IS STILL HOLED UP IN HIS MOUNTAIN VILLAGE NEAR TURBA IN  
HUJARIYYA REGION SOUTH OF TAIZ. HE HAS GATHERED AROUND  
HIM FOLLOWERS FROM PRESENT AND PAST MILITARY FORMATIONS  
WHICH DREW ON HUJARIYYA REGION. NUMBERS OF MEN  
INVOLVED ARE VARIOUSLY ESTIMATED, BUT PROBABLY NOT LESS  
THAN 200 OR MORE THAN 400. THEY HAVE ONLY PERSONAL  
WEAPONS BUT THEY WOULD BE HARD TO ROOT OUT OF RUGGED

TERRAIN IF GOVERNMENT TRIED TO BRING IN DESERTERS FORCIBLY.

2. WE REPORTED EARLIER ON ABDAL ALIM DESERTION IN SANA 2114. OUR OPINION OF HIS PERSONAL AND POLITICAL WEAKNESSES HASN'T CHANGED BUT IT'S WORTH NOTING THAT YAR GOVERNMENT IS PUTTING ITSELF IN POSITION TO MOUNT SHOW OF FORCE AGAINST ABDAL ALIM IF NECESSARY. NORTHERN TROOPS FROM TAIZ BRIGADE HEADED BY NORTHERNER LT. COL. ALI ABDALLAH SALIH, SAUDI PROTEGE AND CO-CONSPIRATOR WITH GHASHMI AGAINST HAMDI, HAVE BEEN DEPLOYED ON ROAD SOUTH OF TAIZ INTO TIHAMA. AUTOMOBILE CHECKS ARE THOROUGH. THERE ARE FURTHER ROAD BLOCKS OFF TAIZ ROAD TOWARD TURBA. GHASHMI HAS BEEN RECEIVING DELEGATIONS FROM NORTHERN TRIBES AND HAS STEPPED UP VISITS WITH OFFICERS OF NORTHERN ARMY UNITS.

3. MISSION OF PRIME MINISTER IS APPARENTLY TO OFFER ANYTHING ABDAL ALIM WANTS AS PART OF DEAL TO LEAVE RPT LEAVE YAR. BY LATEST REPORT, ABDALLAH ABDAL ALIM CONTINUES TO REFUSE ALL OFFERS TO SPURRING SPECULATION BY SECURITY OFFICIALS AND TOP GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS IN SANA THAT HE HAS

SOUNDS AND ADVICE FROM EITHER LIBYANS OR SOUTH YEMENIS. SECURITY CHIEF IN SANA INSISTS THAT ALI HUBAYSHI, FORMER SECRET

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DEPUTY COMMANDER OF CENTRAL PROVINCES "AMALIQA" DIVISION WHO DEFECTED TO SOUTH AFTER HAMDI ASSASSINATION, HAS RECROSSED BORDER TO TREAT WITH ABDAL ALIM. ABDAL ALIM HAS IN ANY CASE REFUSED AT LAST MINUTE TO MEET WITH PM, ALTHOUGH HE ACTUALLY STARTED FOR TAIZ ON WEDNESDAY 10 MAY AND GOT ABOUT HALF WAY BEFORE ROADBLOCKS OF ALI ABDALLAH SALIH CONVINCED HIM HE WAS HEADING INTO TRAP AND LED HIM TURN BACK.

4. GOVERNMENT MILITARY PRECAUTIONS ARE HARD TO JUSTIFY IN TERMS OF WHAT WE KNOW OF ABDAL ALIM'S LOCAL POLITICAL BASE. HE HAS NO TIESGTE CAN TRACE WITH LOCAL POLITICIANS AND ONLY MOST SHADOWY CONNECTIONS WITH LEFTWING POLITICAL PARTIES. HE IS MUCH DEPRECATED FIGURE IN ARMY, WHICH IS OVERWHELMINGLY COMPOSED OF NORTHERN OFFICERS. HE IF PROTEGE OF HAMDI WHO HAS FOR SIX MONTHS COMPROMISED HIMSELF WITH BOTH PRO AND ANTI HAMDI FORCES BY GOING ALONG WITH GHASHMRX. HE HAS LITTLE OR NO POLITICAL BASE IN HUJARIYYA DESPITE CIVIC ACTION PROGRAM WHICH HIS PARATROOPERS RAN THERE, BUILDING ROADS, CLINICS, SCHOOLS, ETC. HE IS ADVISED BY LEFTIST BROTHER-IN-LAW AND BY TWO OFFICERS, TAHA ABD AL NUR AND AHMED MUHSIN,

WHO ARE STRONG NASIRISTS AND MEN WHO MAY HAVE CONTACTS  
WITH SOUTHERN-SUPPORTED MUQAWWIMIN, YAR GUERRILLAS WHO  
HAMDI WAS ALLOWING TO RETURN AFTER THEIR DEFEAT AND  
EXILE IN 1972-73 FIGHTING IN SOUTHERN YAR.

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5. WE THINK GHASHMI CONCERN MUST BE GENERATED BY  
FEAR THAT ABDAL ALIM HIMSELF IS RECEIVING STRONG SUPPORT  
FROM SOUTH YEMEN, EITHER FROM NLF OR LIBYA. THIS  
OPENS UP POSSIBILITY THAT SOUTH WOULD ATTEMPT TO DETACH  
HUJARIYYA OR OTHER BORDER AREAS FROM YAR. AFTER ABDAL  
ALIM RECORD IN OPPOSITION TO PDRY FORCES IN BLOODY  
BATTLES IN 1972 AND 1973 IN THESE BORDER AREAS, WE  
FIND SUCH AN ALLIANCE UNLIKELY BUT FEAR IS REAL TO MANY  
YEMENIS. ONE OF MOST TRAUMATIC EVENTS IN REPUBLICAN  
HISTORY WAS DISAFFECTION OF SHAFE'I UNITS AFTER DEFENSE  
OF SANA IN 1968 FROM ROYALIST BESIEGERS. WITH ROYALIST  
SEIGE AT LAST BROKEN, TOUGH SOUTHERN PARATROOP UNITS  
WITHIN CITY BEGAN INSISTING ON MORE LEFTIST COLOR TO  
GOVERNMENT AND CLOSER TIES TO NEWLY INDEPENDENT SOUTH  
YEMEN. THIS LED TO AUGUST 1968 SHOOTOUT INSIDE SANA  
AND KILLING OF PARATROOP COMMANDER ABD AL WAHHAB ABDUL  
RAQQIB NOMAN. MANY PILOTS AND PARATROOP COMMANDERS  
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DEFECTED TO SOUTH AT THAT TIME. THIS EVENT HAS SHAPED DECISIVELY PSYCHOLOGY OF FEAR AND DISTRUST OF NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN PARTS OF YAR FOR EACH OTHER. BLOODY SHOOTOUT IS CONSTANTLY MENTIONED IN CONVERSATIONS IN SANA TODAY.

6. STRIKING THING ABOUT SITUATION IN SANA IS, HOWEVER, NOT EFFORTS TO CONTAIN ABDAL ALIM DEFECTION, BUT INABILITY OF GHASHMI TO LAUNCH NEW GOVERNMENT. BASED ON VARIETY OF REPORTS, WE DO NOT THINK THAT ABDAL ALIM DEFECTION IS MAIN REASON FOR DELAY IN FORMING NEW GOVERNMENT UNDER ABDAL AZIZ ABDAL GHANI. GHASHMI WOULD, AFTER ALL, BENEFIT FROM SHOW OF SOLIDARITY BY MINISTERS. FACT SEEM TO BE THAT GHASHMI EITHER CANNOT DECIDE WHAT HE WANTS OR CANNOT IMPOSE HIS VIEWS ON OTHERS. NORTHERN TRIBAL LEADERS LIKE ABDALLAH BIN HUSAYN DETEST THZ ADENIS LIKE ABDALLAH AL-ASNAJ AND MUHAMMAD SALIM BASINDWA. THEY WANT MORE POSITIONS IN ARMY FOR THEIR SHAYKHLI FRIENDS. SAUDIS HAVE LONG LIST OF DEMANDS INCLUDING CANDIDATES FOR MINISTRY ON INTERIOR, MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, AND MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS. THEY SEEM TO THINK YEMENIS WILL CHUCK OUT SOVIETS SOON. ACCORDING PAKISTAN AMBASSADOR, SAUDIS HAVE ALL BUT FINISHED NEGOTIATIONS FOR PROTOCOL TO BRING PAK ADVISORS AND SUPPORT PERSONNEL TO YAR ARMY. SOUTHERNERS LIKE ABDAL AZIZ ABDAL GHANI WANT TO BE SURE THAT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS IS STRENGTHENED AND PUT HIGH PREMIUM ON THEIR CANDIDATES FOR CENTRAL PLANNING OFFICE AND MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS.

7. AS HAULING AND SHOVING OF LOCAL POLITICAL GROUPS INCREASES AROUND GHASHMI, MORE OF POLITICAL GROUP WHICH HAS BEEN IN EXILE ARE RETURNING TO YEMEN. YAHYA

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MUTAWAKKIL RETURNS ON 15 MAY. MUHAMMAD IRYANI IS ALSO PLANNING TO COME BACK, ACCORDING TO GOOD FIRSTHAND REPORT.

COMMENT: AS WE REPORTED IN SANA REFTTEL, WE THINK GHASHMI IS IN CONTROL AND WILL PROBABLY LAST AT LEAST ANOTHER SIX MONTHS. HE IS, HOWEVER, UNCERTAIN IN CIVILIAN ARENA DESPITE PERSONAL SHOW OF CONFIDENCE BEFORE AND AFTER ELECTION AS PRESIDENT. ON MAY 12 ALL DIPLOMATS WERE CONVENED TO CONGRATULATE HIM ON ELECTION AND

HE SPOKE BRIEFLY; ADDRESSING VERY MIXED GROUP OF NATIONS HE  
PROMISED THAT "RELATIONS WITH ALL WOULD IMPROVE" AND  
THEN SHORTLY AFTERWARD SAID "THE PRESIDENCY IS HARD  
AND THORNY TASK." IMPRESSION IS GAINING THAT GHASHMI  
ISN'T ABLE COPE WITH POLITICAL PRESSURES DESPITE SAUDI  
BACKING. RANSOM

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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